

## *OCCA endorses countywide aquatic invasive species transport law*

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### **YOUR SUPPORT IS VITAL**

*Remember, there is strength in numbers – membership totals help us to leverage grant funding and statewide partnerships throughout the year. If you have not yet renewed your 2014 membership, please mail your Annual Fund donation today.*

**Our environment.  
Our home.  
Our challenge.**

At the request of several of our partner organizations, the Otsego County Conservation Association has been working this year to gain support for a countywide aquatic invasive species transport law. More than 20 Otsego County entities have signed on in favor of aquatic invasive species transport legislation at the county level. Adoption of such a law simply makes good sense. It would help prevent the spread and establishment of AIS. It would serve as an enforcement mechanism for the good work being done by watershed stewards and would supplement these efforts. It would help protect lakes, rivers, and streams without active stewardship programs and would benefit rather than harm our fishermen and fisheries. The law would strengthen recently adopted DEC and New York State AIS laws. Such a law, if adopted, would not require additional manpower and/or expense to county law enforcement. Aquatic invasive species pose a threat to both the ecological and economic health of Otsego County: to learn more, visit [http://occainfo.org/documents/CarneyAISTransportLaw\\_000.pdf](http://occainfo.org/documents/CarneyAISTransportLaw_000.pdf). Discussion of this issue is currently stalled in the county's Solid Waste and Environmental Concerns Committee. As a result, work on a draft AIS transport law and advancement of a draft to the full Board for consideration will not move forward. Outreach and education associated with adoption of a countywide AIS transport law would not only encourage others to share in the responsibility of preserving and protecting our water resources, but would require them by law to do so. If you are in favor of an AIS transport law, please let Otsego County Board members know.

– Vicky M. Lentz, President

### **Points in Favor of a Countywide AIS Transport Law**

**1. Twenty-one Otsego County signatories supported OCCA's original letter to the Otsego County Solid Waste and Environmental Concerns Committee advocating for the crafting and adoption of a countywide AIS transport law.**

• The original signatories represent water quality professionals, lake associations, fisher-



Photo by Jeff O'Handley

**Gary Holder, Maryanne Kehoe and Gwen Calchi (from left) hand harvest water chestnut in the Goodyear Lake stump lot on August 22 during one of eight pulling sessions this season.**

men, environmental organizations, academic institutions, invasive species experts, property owners, and more.

• The Cooperstown Chamber of Commerce has since also signed on in support of a countywide AIS law.

• These groups represent thousands of Otsego County residents.

**2. Such a law would help prevent the spread and establishment of AIS here.**

• Aquatic invasive species are spread to new waters via boating and fishing equipment.

• Once an invasive species has infiltrated a waterway it can be extremely time consuming and costly to reduce the species and almost impossible to completely eradicate it.

• For instance, the ecology of Lake George was permanently changed when the spiny water flea was introduced there and it is believed unlikely that this species will ever be completely eradicated from the lake.

• As demonstrated by Lake George, municipalities can play a strong role in local AIS prevention and management, particularly at the county level.

**3. Aquatic invasive species pose a threat to both the economic and ecological health of Otsego County.**

• AIS can take over a water body to the point of destroying the aesthetic, recreational and therefore economic potential of an area.

• The most cost-effective approach to combating invasive species is to keep them from establishing in the first place.



# New planner has strong environmental background

Danny Lapin has been hired by the Otsego County Conservation Association to fill the organization's environmental planner position.

Lapin earned his bachelor's degree in environmental sciences from the University of California, Riverside in 2010 and his master's degree in environmental policy this spring from the Bard College Center for Environmental Policy. His research experience focused on strengthening the connection between land-use planning and water management in rural communities in Eastern California. Lapin's career has included environmental planning positions in the Sierra Nevada region of California and a groundwater management post in Southern California.

"My dream has been to integrate strong environmental protections with sustainable economic development in an area as beautiful as Otsego County. Doing my part to ensure that social, economic and environmental principles are incorporated into land-use planning is a top priority," Lapin said.



DANNY LAPIN

Now living in Springfield, Lapin seeks to apply his knowledge and experience to assist communities in Otsego County with their land-use planning needs. He will focus his initial efforts with OCCA on review of the proposed Edic-to-Fraser AC transmission line, facilitating OCCA's Circuit Rider Planner Program, and on assisting communities with environmentally mindful planning initiatives.

Lapin's planning background is both multifaceted and extensive, as he has experience in the academic sector through his research on regional water management at Bard College, at the state level through his work with the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, at the regional level working for the Sierra Nevada Alliance, and at the community level through his experience with the League to Save Lake Tahoe. Lapin has worked on a broad range of issues including the preservation of agricultural lands, the review of transmission line projects, SEQR

review, and on California's Integrated Regional Water Management Program.

"Danny's education and his overall body of work make him such a good fit for the organization," said OCCA Executive Director Darla M. Youngs. "He's a great addition to our team."

The position of environmental planner was created by OCCA to help bring environmental concerns to the forefront of community planning decisions, and to work with Otsego County communities on issues relative to them, ranging from comprehensive planning and regulations to environmental reviews.

Lapin's responsibilities will also entail public outreach on planning issues, research on various environmental issues, grant writing, and fundraising.

"I am honored to be working with OCCA, its partners, and area communities and will work hard to be a strong asset to communities throughout Otsego County," Lapin said.

In addition to his new role at OCCA, Lapin will continue to serve as a researcher at Bard College and plans on joining the American Planning Association Upstate New York Chapter.

## AIS transport law

continued from page 1

- For the past nine years, OCCA and the Goodyear Lake Association have been vigorously battling an invasive plant, the water chestnut, to prevent its spread throughout the northern part of Goodyear Lake and beyond. Thanks to the combined efforts of OCCA and GLA, annual hand pulling of the water chestnut has rendered the stump lot area mostly free of this invasive plant. The cost of these efforts on ONE WATER BODY, for nine years, is estimated in excess of \$100,000.

- There are currently five known aquatic invasive species in Lake George. The Lake George Park Commission estimates that a total of more than \$6.5 million has been spent battling AIS over the past 26 years. It is estimated that other costs, including permitting and planning expenditures, total \$1.4 million.

- A significant amount of the tourism in Otsego County is connected with the health of its waterways. Many activities, such as fishing, boating, and camping, would be diminished if our streams are clogged with *Didymosphenia geminata*, or "rock snot," and if our lakes become infested with spiny water flea the fisheries could collapse.

**4. A countywide AIS transport law would serve as an enforcement mechanism for the good work being done by watershed stewards and would supplement these efforts.**

- The NYSDEC website lists 20 invasive aquatic plants and animals New York boaters need to be concerned about. These are just the COMMON threats, and this list is by no means complete.

- Boat inspection programs at public launches on Otsego and Canadarago lakes help prevent the spread of AIS, but these lakes

remain at risk as they are still accessible from other launch points while countless other lakes, rivers, and streams are also at risk.

**5. An AIS transport law would benefit rather than harm our fishermen and fisheries.**

- An effective AIS transport law would encompass all waterways in the county to help stop the spread of aquatic hitchhikers.

- Hydrilla is not yet present in Otsego County's water bodies. Once introduced, it tends to completely cover the bottoms of lakes in mats up to 30 feet. If introduced here, hydrilla would diminish the economic viability of Otsego County's lakes, reducing their biological diversity for fishing purposes and making both swimming and boating virtually impossible as parts of our lakes are rendered completely inaccessible.

- *Didymosphenia geminata* (rock snot), can line and clog streambeds and – in extreme cases – halt the flow of water and destroy the ecosystem.

- Spiny water fleas eat other small microorganisms that make up the base of the food chain in many lakes, while they themselves are not a desirable food item. This in turn means that fish at higher trophic levels have less food to eat and, as a result, the number of game fish begins to decrease. The long tails of the spiny water flea also get tangled in fishing lines and have to be cut out of fishing nets.

**6. A countywide AIS transport law, if adopted, would not require additional manpower and/or expense to county law enforcement.**

- If Otsego County law enforcement officials are out patrolling, visible plant debris hanging from motors, trailers, etc. is something Sheriff Devlin has said his people would look for in the course of their travels, but they would not make extra and/or special trips to do so.

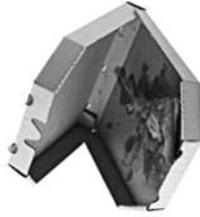
**7. An AIS transport law, if adopted in Otsego County, would**

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# THE TERRIBLE TEN

## ITEMS NOT RECYCLED IN OTSEGO COUNTY\*

1



**NO SOILED FOOD CONTAINERS-** the oils from food make paper un-recyclable.

2



**NO STYROFOAM PEANUTS-** these are difficult and are not cost effective to recycle.

3



**NO LIGHT BULBS-** broken light bulbs can contain mercury and must be disposed of safely.

4



**NO MOTOR OIL BOTTLES-** Motor oil residue can contaminate other plastics making entire batches un-recyclable.

5



**NO PLASTIC BAGS-** these are time consuming to open, can jam machinery, and can get by automated sorters.

6



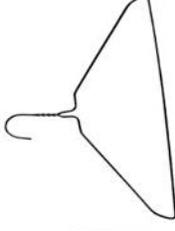
**NO CERAMIC OR METAL OVENWARE-** these can contain materials that cannot be mixed with container glass and can damage glass furnaces.

7



**NO BROKEN GLASS-** some types of glass cannot be recycled together and broken glass can be a safety hazard to sorters.

8



**NO METAL CLOTHES HANGERS-** these have low steel yields and can jam recycling equipment.

9



**NO SILVERWARE-** this is not recyclable in Otsego County.

10



**NO STYROFOAM CONTAINERS OR PACKAGING-** despite the prevalence of Styrofoam, it is not accepted by Otsego County for recycling.

\*These items SHOULD NOT be mixed in with recyclables dropped off at the Otsego County transfer stations or in recycling picked up by Otsego County haulers.

# BEFORE YOU RECYCLE, PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO...

SEE WHAT ELSE IS  
NOT RECYCLED\*\*



**NO PELLET/GARDEN BAGS-**  
these are not accepted among  
Otsego County recyclables.



**NO HARD PLASTICS-** items  
like CD's, electronics, or other  
appliances are not usually  
accepted by Otsego County.



**NO RUBBER-** Rubber is not  
accepted for recycling in Otsego  
County.

AND BE SURE TO...



SEPARATE PLASTIC BAGS FROM  
RECYCLABLES.



RECYCLE PLASTIC SHOPPING  
BAGS AT ANY MEDIUM TO LARGE  
RETAIL/GROCERY STORE.



FLATTEN ALL CARDBOARD  
BOXES BEFORE  
RECYCLING THEM.



WASH OUT ALL BOTTLES  
AND FOOD CONTAINERS  
BEFORE RECYCLING THEM.

\*\*Disclaimer: Some of the items that are not recyclable by Otsego County ARE recyclable or reusable elsewhere. Please go to <http://www.otsegocounty.com/depts/sw/> to learn more\*





**Invasive Species Eradication**



**Otsego Lake Challenge and Upper Susquehanna Watershed Programs**



**Environmental Education Opportunities**

## Our Environment. Our Home. Our Challenge.

OCCA is dedicated to the protection, preservation and enhancement of Otsego County's natural resources:  
*Your Annual Fund gift keeps our programs going!*

### Your contribution can help in the following ways:

- \$10 will pay for one riparian tree in a compromised watershed
- \$10 will recycle 10 pairs of sneakers
- \$25 will pay for water sampling in one aquatic tributary
- \$50 will harvest 25 pounds of invasive water chestnut
- \$75 will stock 50 walleye in Otsego Lake
- \$125 will bale 7,200 pounds of agricultural plastics
- \$250 will pay for an OCCA education mini-grant to a local school
- \$350 will send a middle-school student to Environmental Education Camp
- \$2,500 will sponsor an intern at the SUNY-Oneonta Biological Field Station



**Nature Walks on Otsego County Trails**

**Support these and other important OCCA-funded programs with an Annual Fund gift today!**

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### **YES, please renew my membership and/or support OCCA's programs!**

- Otsego Lake Challenge/Upper Susquehanna Watershed Water Quality Protection Programs \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Environmental Education Opportunities, including DEC Camperships \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Willard N. Harman OCCA Biological Field Station Internship Endowment Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Invasive Species Eradication Programs \$ \_\_\_\_\_     **Membership Renewal** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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*Clip and mail to: Otsego County Conservation Association, PO Box 931, Cooperstown, NY 13326*

**www.occainfo.org**



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# O-C-C-YAY!

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## *AIS transport law*

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**only strengthen recently adopted DEC and NYS AIS laws.**

- It is implied in the language of these laws that transport of aquatic plants and animals is illegal on our roadways and can be penalized, but not necessarily written as such.

- The DEC law only applies to public launch sites managed by DEC.
- The county could strengthen any weak and/or ambiguous language in the state law and/or tailor the language specifically to Otsego County so long as the county's law is consistent with NYS law(s).

- Horizontal and vertical integration of such a law is crucial in establishing the legal defensibility of regulatory language and in minimizing time/resources with regard to mediating disputes over AIS transport issues.

**8. Outreach and education associated with adoption of a countywide AIS transport law would not only encourage others to share in the responsibility of preserving and protecting our water resources, but would REQUIRE THEM BY LAW to do so.**

**YEAR IN REVIEW:** This has been an extremely productive year for OCCA. We're tackling a broad spectrum of rural environmental issues on a daily basis, including water and air quality, land-use planning, solid waste management and recycling, alternative energy and energy conservation, human health, recreation, and stewardship. We work with a very diverse constituency: municipal officials, students ranging from elementary to graduate school, business owners, retirees, environmentalists, farmers, and many others. **To learn more about OCCA's programs in 2014, visit:** <http://occainfo.org/documents/YearinReview2014.pdf>. Many thanks to our volunteers for their help, and to our members for their support!